

REMARKS

By this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 17-20, 22, and 23. Claims 4, 5, 7-13, and 17-24 are currently pending.

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 22 and 23 and rejected all pending claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as failing to conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.¹ Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's objections and rejections under both § 112.

Regarding Claim Objections

To expedite the prosecution of this application, Applicants have amended claims 22 and 23 as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to claims 22 and 23.

Regarding Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection of claims 8-12, 20, 21, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as indefinite. The Examiner alleged that "[c]laim 8 recites the limitation 'the partner' in line 4. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim." (Office Action at 2). However, claim 8 recites, for example, "a partner with which said terminal communicates" in preamble. Therefore, there is sufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in claim 8. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the Section 112 rejection of claim 8.

¹ The Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is identified herein, Applicants decline to automatically subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

Applicants have amended claim 9 to recite “a partner of the cryptographic communication center apparatus” instead of “the partner” to provide sufficient antecedent basis. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the Section 112 rejection of claim 9 and claims 10-12 and 21, which dependent from claim 9, either directly or indirectly.

Applicants also have amended claim 20 to recite “a cryptographic communication center apparatus” to provide sufficient antecedent basis. Although additional amendments have been made to more appropriately define the present invention, Applicants submit that claim 20 is allowable for at least being dependent on an allowable base claim. Further, because claim 25 has been canceled, the Section 112 rejection of claim 25 is moot.

Regarding Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner’s rejection of claim 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Barrett in view of Masuda and further in view of Brundrett and Epstein. However, to expedite the prosecution of this application, Applicants have canceled claim 25. The Section 103 rejection of claim 25 is therefore moot.

Conclusion

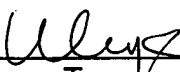
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: February 10, 2006

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